

*Art. Honegger Poulenc Milhaud.
52 Rameau*

disques

**APRIL
1930**

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VOL. I

APRIL, 1930

No. 2

WE thought we knew nearly everybody who was interested in phonograph records but we were certainly mistaken. Subscriptions simply poured in from everywhere. Within two weeks of the publishing date of the first issue we had readers in every state in the Union, several provinces of Canada, Mexico and Cuba. Universities, colleges, schools, public libraries, editors, writers, painters, doctors, lawyers, ministers, musicians, teachers, business people and workers, all sent in the little blank *with remittance*.



We just wish each one of you, for we know from your kind letters that you are just as interested in the success of *Disques* as we are, could have sat beside us as we opened the more than one hundred envelopes that arrived the second day after the sample copies were mailed. We know you would have been just as thrilled as we were. On nearly every blank the subscribers wrote a few words of congratulations and best wishes and with many subscriptions came letters commenting upon *Disques* and wishing it success. Modesty forbids our publishing them but we want the writers to know that they were genuinely ap-

preciated. Reader - interest! We have it and we hope to keep it. We shall make the effort.



Armed with your subscriptions and letters we approached the manufacturers and dealers. It did not require any salesmanship. They simply smiled and said that they would be glad to support *Disques*. And so, dear readers, the risk you took in sending in your subscriptions has been eliminated and you and we can rest more easily upon our pillows. *Disques*, not a month old, is on a firm basis. The ultra conservatives, and those who feel that any game of chance is wicked, may now send in their subscriptions with confidence and a clear conscience. And the stalwart ones who took a chance themselves but feared to suggest *Disques* to their friends may now do so without hesitancy.



As further proof that the artist has been paid, we announce that a series of woodblock portraits of living composers will be published in *Disques*. The first, a portrait of Maurice Ravel, the distinguished French composer, will appear in the May issue. These

portraits have been especially designed for *Disques* by Edward C. Smith, of Philadelphia.



American record collectors, until recently, have been compelled to turn to Europe for widespread and stimulating criticism of records. It thus comes as an agreeable surprise to find the March issue of the *American Mercury*, which in the past has taken a rather lofty attitude toward mechanical music and only a year or so ago printed an article setting forth with gusto the many imaginary evils of the gramophone, carrying a music department in which records are reviewed—and not only reviewed but reviewed with uncommon politeness! Thus the hardest-to-please periodical in America tacitly admits the unescapable importance of what Mr. Lawrence Gilman, in a happy moment, called "Music's New Gateways." It is to be hoped that the *Mercury* will make this a regular monthly feature, for, in addition to phonograph records, piano rolls and books on musical subjects are also considered.



Incredibly slow to realize the infinite possibilities latent in recorded music, American journals at last seem anxious to make amends for their former unaccountable segnitude in the matter. With the *New York Times*, *Herald-Tribune* and the *American Mercury* now not only recognizing mechanical music as a respectable and useful art but actually devoting valuable space to it, it seems a foregone conclusion that other papers and periodicals will presently be doing the same.



We pause—Conrad Ansoerge, pianist and composer, died in Berlin, February 12th. Mr. Ansoerge, whose real name was Eduard Reinhold, made numerous concert tours in America. He studied at the Leipzig Conservatory and was a pupil of Liszt. Mr. Ansoerge's recording of the Schumann *Romances*, *Op. 28*, Nos. 1 and 2 (PA-9308) is fortunately still available.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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CODE

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer and all records are domestic releases unless the word **IMPORTED** appears directly under the number: B-Brunswick, C-Columbia, EB-Edison-Bell, FO-Fonotipia, G-National Gramophonic Society, HO-Homocord, O-Odeon, PA-Parlophon, PD-Polydor, R-Regal (English), and V-Victor.

Honegger, Poulenc and Milhaud

RICHARD GILBERT

1. Honegger: *The Quartet—Le Roi David—Orchestral Works*



Following the war, several radically inclined young musicians banded together with the idea of giving concerts and spreading propaganda of their work. A reporter seized upon the analogy to the Russian "Five," (Balakirew, Moussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakow and Cui), so that it was through the press rather than on the youthful composers' parts that the appellation "*Groupe des Six*" was made. Press-agented in a twentieth century manner, the group was not long in showing an undoubted talent for advertisement. Sometimes they combined this faculty with a complete lack of artistic ability. They worshipped, more or less, that greatest of musical jokers, Eric Satie. It has been said Satie god-fathered the early beginnings of the group. Certainly, it must have been difficult for the Master of Arcueil to acknowledge godparentage of Honegger, the most robust and individual of *Les Six*, and the reactionary and retrograde Durey and Tailleferre. The close association of *Les Six* lasted only two years. Musically they had little in common, politically they had everything to gain by such a heralded nomenclature.

Satie was one of the most original characters in music and his various musical activities extended over a period of forty years. His influence upon his contemporaries was considerable and important. Debussy was helped by Satie's ideas, much less by his music, and made use of the Montmartre pianist's experiments in ancient modes and Gregorian methods. Ravel, too, came under his influence while yet a Conservatoire pupil and did much to secure recognition for him in later years, but the public forever refused to take him seriously. Eric Satie's music sometimes showed rare charm and originality even though disguised by absurd titles such as *Pièces froides* (Cold Pieces), *Morceaux en forme de poires* (Pear-shaped Pieces), *Préludes flasques* (Limp Preludes), *Descriptions automatiques* (Automatic Descriptions), etc. Assisting at the birth of Impressionism, Satie, nevertheless, at a later date exhorted *Les Six* to renounce impressionistic methods in music. Unfortunately, for lack of space, comments on this grand modern ironist must cease here.

The group originally consisted of MM. Arthur Honegger, Francis Poulenc, Darius Milhaud, Georges Auric, Louis Durey, and Mlle. Germaine Tailleferre. Durey seceded. Tailleferre, who was never more than a Conservatoire student-composer, has written a few charming pieces, however, without being revolutionary in any respect. Auric, of late, has rather given up composing in favor of the more blatant field of musical criticism! Auric, the *enfant terrible* of the group is also the most infantile. His work resembles the august Satie's, as does Poulenc's and he exhibits a musical deficiency that is appalling. *Les Six*, once the storm center of Paris, has long since disintegrated; the various members have gone their own individual ways and, peculiarly, some of their writing has already found its way into the gramophone library. The most important of the recordings available of Honegger's, Poulenc's and Milhaud's music will be dealt with in this and following sketches.

Honegger, phonographically speaking, is predominant. He is, to our thinking, one of the most outstanding of present day composers. His music has a peculiar blend

of romanticism, developed from Wagner and Florent Schmitt, and a fresh, healthy, modern sensibility. From the early *Quatuor pour cordes* to the recent *Rugby* can be traced a logical and increasingly individual development. Born in Le Havre, 1892, of Swiss parentage, Honegger combines Gallic fastidiousness with Teutonic perceptivity of form. The best qualities of the French and German schools meet and blend. His music, which at times is wholly atonal, is based entirely on counterpoint.

This Beethovenian person paid a visit to our shores last year and was received with acclamations from both press and public. It is true that there is about Honegger's person, if not about his music, something distinctly Beethovenish. He is black-haired, a bit swarthy, of short, stocky, muscular build; he has a fire in his glance and a quick energetic and athletic spring in his stride. As a conductor, minus baton, Honegger proved himself an able manipulator of the orchestra, pulling with his bare hands, so it seemed, the robust and masculine utterances abiding in the contrapuntal complexities of *Pacific 231*, the *Concertino* and *Rugby* in healthy and endurable fashion. His accomplishments at the piano—in his chamber concerts where he appeared jointly with Andrée Vaurabourg, his wife—were not so praiseworthy. Nevertheless, Honegger like Milhaud has toured our country and unlike Milhaud has awakened in lovers of modern music an idea as to his significance in the world of contemporary art.

The *Quatuor pour deux violons, alto et violoncelle* was completed in 1917 and was later published in 1921. It is dedicated to Florent Schmitt. This early accomplishment, and it is definitely the composer's first completed creation, suffers from over-elaboration but is, at any rate, warranted to stand the test of time because of its earnest quality of combining ideas of strength and of indisputable beauty with solid and substantial workmanship. In concept the quartet is romantic rather than classic, despite its excessive counterpoint, and shows to some degree the influence of Reger and the early Schönberg. Let us not for a moment consider that the work is deficient in individuality. Honegger owes as much to his fore-runners as Debussy owed to Franck, Ravel to Fauré, Strauss to Liszt, and so on, and in much the same manner. The weaknesses of the quartet, there are not many, show only, as a matter of fact, that the young musician has become more at home in his later dramatic and orchestral music. His predilection for rigorous outlines is unapt to the exigencies of the less dramatic chamber form. The first movement, *Appassionato*, is violent and tormented at first and then pleading in its relentless expressiveness. The *Adagio* is sad and tender while the *Allegro* is again violent but with a rhythmical exuberance seldom encountered in quartet literature. The Krettly Quartet of Paris gives a brilliant and well-considered reading on their four records. The first movement occupies two sides; the second, four; the last, two.

The three discs of excerpts from *Le Roi David* provide excellent reasons why a complete recording should be made available. Here is a score of such abundance, vitality and inspiration that no sincere musical public could resist its eloquence. *Le Roi David* is at once the most significant and successful of modern oratorios. The work achieved Honegger a celebrity which, beyond doubt, the fresh spontaneity and profound sincerity of the score warranted. This masterpiece of choral-dramatic writing was composed on commission for the *Théâtre du Jorat*, at Mézières, in Switzerland and, due to the limited budget of the Morax brothers' theatre, was scored for a small orchestra of fifteen players—wood-wind, brass, one double-bass, piano, harmonium, celesta and percussion. Of this original scoring Emile Vuillermoz, the eminent Parisian critic, writes, "Moreover, the original orchestration was written for a band without strings and the domain of wind instruments is well

known to be one that musicians of today are feverishly exploring. The strings, interrogated for many centuries by restless, sensitive souls, apparently have given up all their secrets. The wood-winds and brasses, on the other hand, are still rich in mysteries that musicians are discovering gradually and with astonishment. . . . In *Le Roi David*, Honegger has succeeded in using the strong, fresh color of wind instruments in the happiest way; and I scarcely know whether he was right in rewriting his first version to facilitate the performance by regular symphony orchestra. The subject, moreover, suited him to perfection. These twenty-eight fragments gave him the opportunity to treat a variety of themes with very different color effects." The French Gramophone band recording of instrumental excerpts illustrates graphically this point in regards to tone color. The *Cortège* (page 17 to bottom of page 19 of the miniature score) is a short fragment and is followed by *La mort de David* which is wholly negligible due to the fact that the complete selection is recorded with soloists, chorus, orchestra and organ on the Odeon disc 123,593. This Odeon record gives an adequate presentation of the music that accompanies the narrator (beginning on page 225), however, with the actual spoken narration omitted, where he declaims, in the *Couronnement de Salomon*, "And Nathan said: Before all Israel and before Jehovah we anoint as King, Solomon, —." The music continues without a cut into *La mort de David* and proceeds to the end of the work. The remaining band excerpts on the Gramophone disc are splendid portions from the collection of instrumental interludes occurring in the oratorio. *Le camp de Saül* comes between the narrator's: "So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and he gat him away, and no man saw it: because a deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them." and: "War broke out anew between the Philistines and the King of Israel. Saul's army is hard pressed on the steep hillsides, for the enemy's horses draw near, and David is with the Philistines, the people of Israel call upon the Lord in vain." The B section, *Marche des Hébreux* (page 199 to bottom of page 206) is accented by a tempo of savage and oriental languor. Here, as in other of the processions and fanfares in *Le Roi David*, the influence of *Le Sacré du Printemps* asserts itself.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 67)

THE RECORDS

Honegger: *Quatuor pour cordes*. Eight sides. Played by the Krettly Quartet, Paris. Four 10-inch discs (French Columbia—D13049 to D13052 incl.). Price, \$1.30 each. Miniature score—La Sirene, Paris.

Honegger: *Le Roi David*; (a) *Cortège*, (b) *La mort de David* (trans. G. Balay) one side and (a) *Le camp de Saül*, (b) *Marche des Hébreux* (trans. G. Balay). Played by *Musique d'Harmonie* under the direction of M. G. Balay. One 12-inch disc (French Gramophone—L749). Price, \$1.75.

Honegger: *Le Roi David*; (a) *Miséricorde ô Dieu!* (b) *De mon cœur jaillit un cantique*. One side and *Je fus conçu dans le péché*. One side. *Dieu le dit: Un jour viendra*. One side and *Alleluia* (Final). One side. Performed by the Chorus of the Church of Saint William with Organ and Municipal Orchestra of Strasbourg under the direction of M. Fritz Munch. (Soprano solo: Mlle Lutz). Two 12-inch discs (French Odeon 123,592 and 123,593). Price, \$1.60 each. Miniature score—Fœtisch Frères S. A. Editeurs, Lausanne.

Honegger: *Pacific 231*. In two parts. Played by Continental Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Piero Coppola. One 12-inch disc (Victor 9276). Price, \$1.50. Miniature score—Philharmonia.

Honegger: *Rugby*. In two parts. Played by Grand Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Piero Coppola. One 12-inch disc. (French Gramophone W1015). Price, \$2.00. Miniature score—Editions Maurice Senart, Paris.

MISSA SOLEMNIS

JOSEPH COTTLER

Missa Solemnis in D Major, Opus 123. Rendered by Lotte Leonard, Emmy Land, (Sopranos); Eleanor Schlosshauer-Reynolds, (Contralto); Anton Topitz, Eugen Transky, (Tenors); Wilhelm Guttman, Herman Schey, (Basses); Wilfried Hanke, (Violin); Bruno Kittel Choir and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Kittel. Eleven 12-inch discs (B-90020 to B-90030 inclusive) enclosed in album. Brunswick Set No. 17. Price, \$16.50. Miniature score—Philharmonia No. 74.

A study of his activity during the five year period 1818-1823 when he made the *Mass in D* would lead the literary-minded to sum it up neatly that Beethoven was himself the perfect symbol of his music. With caution for the clink of the phrase, it might serve as a useful suggester of our composer's then dual figure. Never before or in his brief aftertime is he so interesting to watch, for at this point in his life he seems to have in him both elements of many antitheses: pride and humility, candor and cunning, art and humbug,—for examples. It is amazing how one who had always taken refuge from life in music should at fifty, step out so vigorously into the dirty highways.

Outwardly he presents a sad, pathetic aspect. His friends have dropped off one way or another, leaving him in terrifying loneliness. He persuades the law on righteous and moral grounds—by hook or crook—to give him custody of his dead brother's son. But just as his hunger for human love is being satisfied, along comes the "immoral" mother of the boy—with another law—and robs him of her child. His health is low, with painful signs of the disease which, a few years later, finishes him. He is deaf; mad, too, they say; and, to crush him entirely, impoverished. It is at this time that a policeman—a close student of physiognomy—arrests him as a vagrant.

But alas for sympathy! He puts up a savage fight for his nephew, and, with the help of his royal pupil, the Archduke Rudolf, wins back the boy and deprives the mother. For lack of friends, he enjoys the exhilaration of being driven in on himself. There is some evidence that he does not miss new friends, whom he seems rather to avoid. He makes great moan of his poverty, but I suspect, uses it as an excuse for indulging in decidedly sharp practice—to say the kindest. For Beethoven's work is now in great demand and the promise of a composition from him is enough to bring forth an advance from any publisher. He accordingly avails himself of this *prestige*. "I am writing my greatest work—for you alone," he whispers to four or five publishers in turn. "You will not mind paying my price." Interminably he haggles.

All this time he is in travail with the *Mass*. Schindler tells of a visit to him.

"In the living room, behind a locked door, we heard the master singing parts of the fugue in the Credo—singing, howling, stamping. After we had been listening a long time to this almost awful scene, and were about to go away, the door opened and Beethoven stood before us with distorted features, calculated to excite fear. He looked as if he had been in mortal combat with the whole host of contrapuntists, his everlasting enemies. His first utterances were confused, as if he had been disagreeably surprised at our having overheard him. Then he reached the day's happenings and with obvious restraint he remarked: 'Pretty doings, these! Everybody has run away and I haven't had anything to eat since yesternoon.'"

Artistically, in contrast, he is remote from any taint of the dishonesty in his practical dealings. Nothing can drive him to hurry the publication of the Mass. It was to be ready for performance in 1820 on the occasion of the installation of the Archduke Rudolf as an Archbishop. Beethoven is a year, two years late. His money runs out and he is forced to borrow, when he could easily write "*finis*" and take his own. The Mass is scandalously overdue. But he holds high his ideals. He goes on laboriously amending, revising, improving. There is a hole in the heavy paper of the manuscript worn through in the timpani scoring for the *Agnus Dei* where he tries to suggest threats of war. The conception will get itself expressed! Even if the moral law of Kant, which Beethoven revered, should suffer, the aesthetic law must be satisfied.

II

The work is scored for a quartet of solo voices, full chorus, and orchestra. The effect is of a double chorus and complete orchestra, the solo voices adopted in the chorus for the sake of flexibility. The polyphony is therefore tremendously complex. Indeed,—as it was to the deaf composer,—the score has an interest for the eye which is hardly detectable by the ear, for which the growth is often too tropical.

The five divisions of the text are treated symphonically, the movements welded together by the principal themes and intensified by everchanging developments of the short subjects—short by condensation and surcharge. It is the writing of one of the giants of that Romantic day, the Beethoven of the last period, who, as Amiel notes, is "torn with feeling . . . the slave of his genius."

The latter phrase is particularly apt to the Mass because it is there the poet might be expected to draw from within himself a mystic half-light, a vision, a Bach-like fluency and brooding; whereas Beethoven is violent, impassioned, and quick with means to self-expression. The abstract ideas of the ritual indeed engage him. But he does not celebrate religion for religion's sake so much as for the sake of the celebration. He does not dream of heaven; he builds a temple. The struggle in him is entirely that between his material and his talent to express his material. There is in consequence no pathos in his pleading, no sense of mystery in his *Crucifixus*, no rhapsody in his *Et Resurrexit*. There is something else, however; something of far greater import perhaps, and that is: an exercise of power—sublime, heroic power which cares little for its subject, leaves the consideration of balanced form to lesser natures, and tends to destroy every feeling which subtracts from its own solitary grandeur. This is the sense in which the *Mass in D* is dual, as its creator is dual.

Instead of the lyrical you must therefore expect the dramatic. It is the canon, for its strength, that particularly attracts Beethoven. And the involutions of his canons appear everywhere, like endless arches and buttresses springing out of one another to strengthen the structure. Instead of harmonic color you must expect dynamic shading. Those impetuous outbursts and sudden contrasts are the very essence of Beethoven's power.

Details may belie the description of the work as a unit. There are, for instance, three or four lovely lyric passages: the *Qui Tollis*—can anyone help but give way to simple feeling at this part of the service?—*Benedictus*, and the entire *Agnus Dei* which is thrilling and makes an interesting study in the handling of two contrasting ideas. The present recording is too satisfying to need comment, although the choral section is favored against the instrumental. One feature, however, it is a pleasure to mention: that the solo bass and tenor are, without any doubt, great singers.

The Waltz King

RICHARD J. MAGRUDER

Most sensible philosophers, sooner or later in the course of their gloomy speculations, reach the atrabilious conclusion that the salient desire of mankind is not to be instructed and edified but, rather, to be reassured and comforted. Where black is plainly visible, man strives heroically to see white. He likes to be told, and told constantly with convincing and, indeed, overwhelming evidence, that things are really very much better than they actually are, that if the pocketbook is empty today, tomorrow it will be bulging; he wants to believe, even though the facts point irrevocably in the other direction, that this is a pretty nice world after all, and that he himself is one of its most impressive and gorgeous ornaments.

The humane business of making all this seem not only perfectly plausible but even actually so is the first task of the composer of what is termed light or popular music. Of all the writers of this sort of music, one is tempted to believe, the late Johann Strauss of Vienna was surely one of the most thoroughly accomplished and signally successful. Strauss made optimism, usually so offensive and repugnant because it is, on even the most casual inspection, so doubtful and groundless, attractive and engaging. He said charming things in an unfailingly charming way—and so who cares whether they were true or not? There are pages in his scores which are as powerful and effective in bolstering the human ego to magnificent and wholly incredible heights as just a few sips too much of sparkling Burgundy.

Strauss seems to be regarded somewhat dubiously today. Many otherwise estimable people apparently believe it to be a rather low and shameful thing to profess genuine admiration for music so tuneful and obvious that it can be comprehended and enjoyed without even a meagre musical education. It is, they somehow think, an unmistakable indication of an inferior culture. Because Strauss worked in a limited form, because he was perfectly cognizant of his limitations and so did not attempt to write symphonies and music dramas when his talents were obviously confined to the waltz and operetta—because of all this, it is sometimes too readily taken for granted that his was an art designed solely for the multitude and hence was, at best, a spurious and trivial art, lacking in good taste and sound musicianship.

It is a pity. In Johann's day things were different. There was no doubt as to his musical ability. It was generally, and often enthusiastically and even a bit enviously, conceded that he was first-rate. Everyone knows of the great delight that Brahms took in the works of Strauss. The two men were excellent friends, and often spent their summers close together. Brahms made it a point to be present at all the openings of Strauss' operettas, and once, under the spell of the *Beautiful Blue Danube*, he scribbled on Frau Strauss' fan, "*Leider nicht von Johannes Brahms*"—Unfortunately, *not* by Johannes Brahms. The composer of the *C Minor Symphony*, the slow movement of the *F Minor Piano Quintet*, the *German Requiem* and many other works of the highest and most exalted beauty, was not the sort of man to be carried away, even momentarily, by a mere well-turned and pretty tune. The compliment was a tremendous one, one of the most tremendous in all history, Mr. H. L. Mencken thinks.

It was hinted above that Strauss was something of an optimist. But he was not one of those blind and irritating optimists who are forever seeing the bright side of things when no bright side exists. Strauss' gayety was the gayety of the moment, the evanescent joy of a brief and fleeting mood. His good spirits were sound, robust ones; they were the good spirits of a thoroughly civilized and intelli-

gent man. In even the gayest and wildest of his incomparable pieces, one always finds a certain cynical melancholy, a faint but unmistakable suggestion that the jovial Johann was entirely aware of the fact that the world does not always move along in complete harmony with the wonderful lilt and swing of his waltzes.

Taking the waltz as his father left it, he developed it into a form almost symphonic in proportions, making of it a thing of sheer loveliness, haunting tenderness and suffusing radiance. The introduction, which had before been merely an opening fanfare, he elaborated into a kind of overture, often making several complete changes in tempo; and his pieces concluded with brilliant and striking codas. In these complex and often beautiful codas, he made excellent use of nearly every resource at the composer's command, including even counterpoint. The vast difference that exists between the Strauss' waltzes and the waltzes of other composers of light music—of the waltzes of, for example, Waldteufel, Lincke, Ziehrer, Lanner and Gung'l—is to be found in Strauss' immensely superior craftsmanship, his ingenious managing of his procession of keys, his striking and unceasingly novel instrumentation. Strauss never let his bass become monotonous. It isn't very difficult for even the most charming of waltzes to become tiresome and uniform, but Strauss was infinitely too clever and resourceful a musician ever to let that happen: he always had on hand some fresh and ravishing trick or other with which he made such effective use as to keep interest infallibly alive.

It is pleasant to report, in conclusion, that the various gramophone companies have been fairly generous in their dealings with the Strauss waltzes. More attention devoted to his operettas, especially when so much care has been lavished upon Gilbert and Sullivan, would be welcome, but the recent Polydor recording of *Die Fledermaus* (for future review), in an abridged version, helps to overcome this deficiency, and no doubt the future will see the release of more music from these altogether charming pieces. To give a detailed account of the various Strauss records here would require far too much space; and besides it would be more or less pointless, for Johann's music is designed primarily for the ears on a holiday and not for cold, critical analysis.

Brief mention should, however, be made of a few of the more deserving Strauss discs. The Odeon Company has been particularly enterprising in making Johann's music available; and it is to this firm that we are indebted for delightful records of selections of the music from *Die Fledermaus* and the *Gypsy Baron*. Edith Lorand and her orchestra, a small but capable little band, play portions of *Fledermaus* on two 12-inch discs (O-3252 and O-3255); and in their *Gypsy Baron* record (O-3230) they give what is easily the most satisfactory recording of this music available.

Several rather unfamiliar pieces, buried in the Victor International list, deserve attention. These, all played by Hans Knappertbusch and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, comprise *Come Let Us Be Joyful* (V-V50009), *Danube Maiden* (V-V50008) and *Acceleration* (V-V56025). And there are many others; almost any catalogue of the major gramophone companies contains numerous examples, some of them recorded with great competence and skill, of the works of this master of popular music.

Not massive, heaven-storming works of art, nonetheless these little pieces have a secure and solid place in the libraries of record collectors. They lend themselves admirably to recording; and today, with the ceaseless din of jazz constantly harassing the ears, they come as a great and unspeakable relief. It is like escaping from the horrors of a nightmare into the bracing sunlight of the morning.



ORCHESTRA

**MOZART
GLUCK**

V-7136

to

V-7138

Incl.

Symphony in D Major (K 385) (Mozart) Five sides and
Orfeo ed Euridice—Dance of the Spirits (Gluck) One side. Both
played by Arturo Toscanini and the Philharmonic-Symphony
Orchestra of New York.
Three 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-65. Price, \$6.50.

Miniature score—Philharmonia No. 51.

The great Italian maestro gives this exquisite Mozart symphony a reading which in perfection of detail, coherence to structure, and dynamic percision must rank at the very top of all orchestral recordings. It is most amazing how Toscanini clarifies even the simplest scores, investing them with a spiritual beauty and fidelity untranslatable except in the very music itself. Mr. Gilman's encomiastic remarks regarding Toscanini's recorded performance of the Haydn "Clock" symphony are also most appropriate to this set. The mechanical fraction has been perfect in impressing permanently this signal interpretation; all of the delicate balance and fine phrasing are here captured for all time. The "actual" performance is at your command. Follow the work with the score and you will surely be thrilled by this necromantic virtuosity; every part and every measure is superbly summoned into being and displayed with unvarying subtlety of nuance and shading by Toscanini's incalculable genius. Hail to Victor! This is a precious document and beyond all criticism!

As for the music, it is noteworthy to say that while insufficient attention has been paid to this delicate and charming work it is by no means greatly inferior to the better known E Flat, G Minor and C Major ("Jupiter") symphonies. The *Symphony in D Major* (K 385) was composed for a festivity held in the house of Siegmund Haffner, the highly esteemed mayor of Salzburg, and dates to 1782. It was written about the same time as *Il Seraglio*. Mozart originally intended the present symphony as a *Serenade* and it therefore contained an introductory March and two Minuets. Later when the composer again produced the work in his Vienna Academy he eliminated these extra pieces and thus definitely made the work a four movement symphony. It appears that Mozart wrote the work in great haste owing to an urgent command from his father and, when the score was returned to him in Vienna, was agreeably surprised at the excellent quality of the music which he had meanwhile forgotten. In a letter to Leopold Mozart he says: "The new Haffner symphony has greatly surprised me, for I did not even know of it anymore; it certainly must make a good effect."

Indeed the symphony is one of Mozart's most effective compositions. The first movement is replete with interesting details in its thematic workmanship. It is characterized by a festive brilliancy and is governed by one forceful figure which recurs over and over again in ingeniously devised variations and varying contrapuntal configurations. The *Andante* is fashioned out of a simple, limpid and soaring song-like theme. A vigorous *Minuet* leads into a *Trio* of pure loveliness, then a *da capo* to the first theme. The last movement is a deviation from the usual sonata procedure and creates the impression of the *rondo* form.

The *Orfeo ed Euridice* excerpt, the most popular section of the ballet music, is exceptionally well-played with the flute solo performed with superb virtuosity.

R. G.

**TSCHAI-
KOWSKY**

C-67735D

to

C-67739D

Incl.

Symphony No. 4 in F Minor. Opus 36. Ten sides. Played by Willem Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam.
Five 12-inch discs enclosed in album. Columbia Set No. 133.
Price, \$10.00.



Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 30.

In making a critical estimate of this set one is confronted with a problem purely of situation and tone balance. By reason of its interpretive and realistically recorded excellence, the Stokowski reading of the Tschai-kowsky Fourth for Victor makes comparison to Mengelberg's distinguished reading unavoidable. To quibble about differences of interpretation or recording virtuosity is as foolhardy as setting out on a discourse that will lead to nowhere. We shall confine our remarks to the point in mind which is that listening to the Stokowski, by reason of the exaggerated solo prominences and doubtful chiaroscuro, one feels that he is hearing from the conductor's stand; whereas, the Mengelberg, because of its clear shading and perfection of orchestral balance, makes the impression of hearing from a fine seat in the auditorium.

The equipollent instrumental balance of Mengelberg's Concertgebouw Orchestra recording shows that a true orchestral perspective can be achieved and that a great degree of nuance and shading can be alembicated in a reproduction of "actual" depth and brilliance.

The opening theme on horns and bassoons, reinforced later by trombones and trumpets, comes out strongly; horns and bassoons at the sixteenth bar subside from *f* to *p* with the proper degree of perspective; clarinets and oboes following take their proper place, to the rear; the movement of the *Valse* takes the strings out in front, and here is achieved in the very beginning a perfectly adjusted balance of tone colors that is held with unvarying percision throughout the remaining records of the set. Further on page seven of the score a perfect balance between woodwinds and strings is evident. In the Stokowski recording of this and subsequent combinations the flutes are too powerful, even gargantuan, for the strings. Mengelberg contrives an exquisite *Andantino* in which the beautiful song-like melody played on the oboe is distant enough to create the "actual" impression (in the Victor recording this solo is loud and penetrating). The accompanying *pizzicato* is clear and distinct though delicately *pianissimo*. On page one forty-seven the Concertgebouw's 'cellos reveal an expressive tone, playing in the alto clef, that is simply sublime. The present reviewer has never heard, on records, a 'cello tone so satisfying. The *Pizzicato ostinato* of the *Scherzo* is a thing of delight. The crown of the set lies on the superb recording of the triumphant air for full orchestra which opens the *Finale*. Brass, woodwinds and strings register with evenness. Extremely well-timed percussion, cymbals and timpani, are captured with astounding and emphatic realism.

Mengelberg's reading is a great interpretation, imbued with feeling and consummate musicianship. For that matter so is Stokowski's. Yet the difference—the main issue when comparing the sets—lies theoretically in one's choice of a vantage place from which to hear the symphony. For this reviewer a seat in the audience has always seemed preferable to a listening place in the midst of the orchestra.

R. G.



ROUSSEL

V-L754

and

V-L755

IMPORTED

Le Festin de l'Araignée. Four sides. Played by "Le Trigentuo
Lyonnais" under the direction of M. Charles Strony.
Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.75 each.

Miniature score—Durand et Cie, Paris.

The most eminent representatives of the French modern school (when we except the younger men) are Ravel, Dukas, Schmitt and Roussel. The recording of this wholly delightful ballet by Roussel brings to the gramophone treasury the first discs containing purely orchestral music of this contemporary musician. Albert Roussel was born in 1869 at Tourcoing. He was first a naval officer and did not devote himself to music until he reached his twenty-fifth year. He recognized his true vocation while he was cruising under Eastern skies. From these tropical journeys he brought back, like Baudelaire, a passion for the sea and sunlit lands, which pervades his music. Roussel studied with Eugène Gigout, the great organist; then, at a later date, in the *Schola Cantorum*. The influence of d'Indy and his confreres found an antidote in the grace and splendor of the Debussyist school. *Le Festin de l'Araignée* (The Feast of the Spider) is positive proof of this reaction to Impressionism. However, for years Roussel wavered between the *Schola* and Debussyism, creating works of surprising freshness and spontaneity. Henry Prunières describes Roussel as a poet: "He seizes the multiple and mysterious echoes which Nature evokes in the human soul and clothes them in the magic of music." In his works "one finds a strong feeling for Nature; the fragrance of the woods, the rhythms of the light playing between the branches, all expressed with a poesy, a veridancy, a lively charm of a highly personal quality."

The ballet here recorded was composed in 1912 and is based on the following entomological program:

"In a garden, on a beautiful summer afternoon, a spider ferociously prepares a trap of its web, then lies in wait for its unsuspecting prey. The small insect people, beetles, praying mantes, May-flies,* desert their customary occupations. The ant people, progressing with tiny steps, make their entry in good order and laboriously organize in the removal of a rose petal. A giddy butterfly lets itself be caught in the web and suffers from the cruel embrace of the spider. A May-fly dances and dies, intoxicated by the full day and glaring light. A praying mantis kills the spider which expires after terrific agonies. The ants solemnly proceed to the funeral services of the May-fly. Calmness and silence redescends upon the corner of the little garden which drowns in the twilight while a glow-worm lights its night lamp at the foot of a rose bush."

This poetic idea is treated musically in the most ingenious and most spiritual fashion by the subtle art of Albert Roussel. In a letter to M. Strony, director of *Le Trigentuo Lyonnais*, Roussel makes the following appreciation: "I had recently the pleasure of hearing, on the gramophone, your recording of *Le Festin de l'Araignée*, which is truly excellent and I am quite eager to offer you my sincere compliments on this work. The different parts detach themselves neatly. The sonorities are clear, the themes perfectly put in relief."

C. A.

(*A small and beautiful fly which, after reaching its perfect state, takes no food and speedily dies, though it may live for two or three years in the larval state.)

MASSENET**C-50209D**

and

C-50210D

Scenes Pittoresques. (1) March. (2) Air de Ballet. (3) Angelus. (4) Fête Bohême. Four sides. Played by Pierre Chagnon and Symphony Orchestra. Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.25 each.

**BRAHMS****V-B3145**

IMPORTED

Hungarian Dances Nos. 1 and 3. Two sides. Played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

ROSSINI**PA-E10891**

IMPORTED

Italiana in Algeria: Overture. Two sides. Played by the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.60.

V-22288

Semiramide: Overture. Two sides. Played by the Victor Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Rosario Bourdon. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 654.

KELER BELA**O-3289**

Hungarian Lustspiel Overture. Two sides. Played by Dr. Weissmann and the Grand Symphony Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

The *Scenes Pittoresques* were first performed at the Chatelet Concerts in 1874. They begin with a "petite marche" of very agreeable orchestration; the "air de ballet" is a charming movement of languid character; "Angelus" presents a delightful picture of the hour—its orchestral effects achieve a curious and pleasant sonority; and, the closing number, "fête Bohême," makes a brilliant contrast somewhat characterizing the Polonaise. In this last movement one can visualize a students' ball where everything is laughter. Extravagance and high spirits reign supreme. A characteristic of the entire set is the remarkable clearness and fineness of the reproduction. The recording orchestra is under the direction of M. Pierre Chagnon, a capable and exacting musician.

Clemens Krauss paid his first visit, as guest-conductor, to America last season, appearing with the Philadelphia Symphony and New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestras. This is his first appearance as a recording conductor and we trust it will not be his last. Krauss is quite happy and at home with pieces of the *Hungarian Dances* character. A thrilling disc.

Rossini was only twenty-five when his two-act opera buffa, *Italiana in Algeria* was first produced in Venice in 1813. The overture is very simple in construction: there is an *andante*, a development with a repeat, two themes, the second of which appears at first in the relative key of the overture, and the piece ends in the opening key, like a Haydn symphony. Dr. Weissmann and the indefatigable Berlin State Opera Orchestra give a thoroughly enjoyable performance, aided by flattering recording.

Semiramide possibly still has some admirers. They will find little to complain of in this recording.

This is not the same *Hungarian Lustspiel Overture* by Keler Bela as that listed last month (Odeon 3287). Encyclopedic listings do not give us the number of such overtures written by the Hungarian band master but, evidently, unless the labelings are wrong, he wrote several. Dr. Weissmann takes this brilliantly orchestrated piece for a finely recorded airing.

**FALLA****B-90032**

La Vida Breve: Interlude and Dance. Played by the Philharmonic Orchestra of Berlin under the direction of Albert Wolff, Opera-Comique, Paris. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

Manuel de Falla is justly considered one of the greatest of Spanish composers. He was born in 1876, at Cadiz, and studied music in Madrid under Felipe Pedrell, the father of the modern Spanish school. (See the review of J. B. Trend's *Manuel de Falla and Spanish Music* under BOOKS in this issue.)

In 1905 Falla won the prize in a national competition with *La Vida Breve* (*Life is Short* or *Our Little Life*), the work destined to be the foundation of his world-wide fame. The plot of *La Vida Breve* is slight. Salud, a gypsy girl of Granada, is deserted by her lover, Paco. She watches the wedding feast through the iron railing, bursts into her family into the courtyard where the dance is being held, and falls dead at the faithless man's feet. Mr. Pedro Morales has acutely observed, Salud and not Carmen is the true Spanish type. The two excerpts here recorded are orchestral interludes of scintillating colors and Andalusian rhythms. The true quality and depth of the recording bring out the splendid conducting of Albert Wolff to a full degree.

WAGNER**V-7192**

Siegfried: Act 2—Waldweben (Forest Murmurs). Two sides. Played by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York under the direction of Willem Mengelberg. Violin solo by Scipione Guidi. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

It is in music like the *Waldweben* that the value of the gramophone becomes doubly enhanced. Most stage performances provide a forest that falls considerably short of the cool, fragrant glade that Wagner pictures so vividly and unforgettably, and in the general disappointment that ensues much of the force and primal beauty of the music is necessarily lost. Great music, like great literature, is best enjoyed and assimilated alone, with no external objects to interfere with the workings of the imagination; and this miracle has at last been supplied by the once lowly and much-abused gramophone.

The rustling of the strings, the glowing upward sweep of the violas and violoncellos, the exquisite soaring violin solo, representing Freia, goddess of youth and love, the bird songs—these combine to form one of the most memorably delicate scenes in the entire *Ring*. Music of piercing and impassioned beauty, it is given a compelling and persuasively eloquent interpretation by Mengelberg and the Philharmonic-Symphony. Beyond reasonable cavil so far as the recording and playing are concerned, this disc is easily the finest reproduction of the *Waldweben* now available; the Bayreuth Festival version doesn't give enough of the music, and Leo Blech's recording, while satisfactory, yet lacks the power and full, round tone that Mengelberg achieves here.

R. J. M.

**MEYERBEER
RUBINSTEIN****B-90031**

Le Prophète: Act IV, Scene 2—Coronation March. (Meyerbeer). One side and
Toreador et Andalouse. (Rubinstein). One side. Both played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Julius Prüwer. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

LISZT**B-90035**

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. Two sides. Played by the Opera Orchestra (Berlin-Charlottenburg). One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

Two European discs repressed by Brunswick: the first (Meyerbeer and Rubinstein) is a rousing recording, the second (Liszt) is an uninteresting rendering of the typical war-horse.

CONCERTO



BRAHMS

V-DB1311

to

V-DB1314

Incl.

IMPORTED

Double Concerto in A Minor, Opus 102. Eight sides. Played by Pablo Casals (Violoncello) and Jacques Thibaud (Violin) with the Pablo Casals Orchestra of Barcelona under the direction of Alfred Cortot.

Four 12-inch discs in album. Price, \$10.00.

Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 723.

The last orchestral work to be composed by Johannes Brahms was this perfectly beautiful and exquisitely constructed *Double Concerto in A Minor, Opus 102*. The work is in three movements—*Allegro, Andante, and Vivace non troppo*—and was written in 1887. Niemann has remarked that the Double Concerto is almost lost both for the present and the future by reason of its infrequent performance. "This is because it demands two players of consummate technique and sure mastery, so thoroughly accustomed to playing together as can hardly happen except with members of the same family." Herr Niemann certainly did not consider the unlimited possibilities of the gramophone, neither did he reckon with the collaboration of Thibaud, Casals and Cortot. J. Fuller Maitland, in his exhaustive biographical study of Brahms, writes of this concerto:

"While the instruments are closely welded into the general structure of the work, there are not wanting passages of display, such as the fine opening cadenza for the two solo instruments, and their passage in full harmony together. The vigorous theme of the opening *allegro*, and the delicious second subject given at first to the violoncello, must strike even those hearers who are not unnaturally puzzled by the unusual character and coloring of the piece, in which the main contrast is between the orchestra and the two soloists playing together and often creating the impression as of a string quartet. The loveliness of the slow movement is irresistible, and from the graceful curve of its main subject to the Coda all is full of beauty and poetical meaning. In the last movement there is a return to Brahms's favorite gypsy music, which is inevitably suggested in the rhythm of the opening, announced by the violoncello. It is curious to see how prominent is the part given to the lower solo instrument throughout the concerto, and here again both subjects are at first allotted to the violoncello. There is a remarkable wealth of thematic material in the movement, and the writing for the soloists is so full that in more than one passage the effect of a string sextet is given by both violin and violoncello having passages of triple-stopping. The piece cannot be played by ordinary virtuosi, who fail to lift it from its obscurities as great artists do."

Brahms wrote the concerto for his two close friends, Joseph Joachim, the great violin virtuoso, and Robert Hausmann, the famous 'cellist. Thibaud and Casals play the work consummately and we can well believe, as brilliantly as did the two artists for whom it was written. The Spanish 'cellist is amazingly superb and, although Thibaud's tone is inclined to occasional hardness, the Frenchman performs his difficult role with equal ease and skill. The orchestra, it should be noted, is a most efficient and well-trained organization and is competently controlled by the baton of Cortot, once more in a capacity for which he first became famous. The recording is satisfactory and the balance between solo instruments and orchestra is achieved with a fine equipollency. Here is a set of records which will become valuable because of the infrequent performance of the work.

**MOZART****PA-E10921**

to

PA-E10924**Incl.****IMPORTED**

Violin Concerto No. 5 in A (K 219) Eight sides. Played by Joseph Wolfstahl (Violin) and the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra conducted by Dr. Weissmann. Four 12-inch discs in album. Price, \$6.40.

Miniature score—Eulenburg No. 717.

The A Major Concerto, the fifth for violin, is the second to appear completely recorded. The *Concerto in E Flat Major* (K 268) has been available on discs for several years, having been recorded for Victor by Jacques Thibaud. That wonder prodigy, Master Yehudi Menuhin, records the *Adagio* movement from the G Minor Concerto, with piano accompaniment, on the Victor disc reviewed under VIOLIN in this issue. The work under present consideration is from Mozart's nineteen year old pen and is a beautiful and striking example of eighteenth century writing in the form. The instrument is accompanied by the usual small orchestra; strings, horns and oboes. The three movements—*Allegro*, *Adagio*, and *Tempo di Menuetto (Allegro) Tempo di Menuetto*—contain some captivating and enchanting music: tunes of pure loveliness embroidered with occasional decorative passages and, in the first movement, a cadenza of unusual brilliancy. The form of the final movement is interesting. First, it is in the shape of a gracious Minuet; then an intermediate part introduces a March after the manner of the famous "Rondo alla Turca" (hence the name "The Turkish Concerto"). The concerto ends with a return to the movement of the Minuet. Several *tutti* passages are omitted, otherwise the work is recorded without cuts. Wolfstahl's playing is distinguished by no extraordinary brilliancy. Nevertheless his interpretation is adequate and, even though his tone is not so finely spun as one would wish, he gives an ample and well-conditioned rendering. The reproduction rises to Parlophone's fine standards.

DEBUSSY**V-W1027****IMPORTED**

Rapsodie pour Orchestre et Saxophone. Two sides. Played by M. Viard (Saxophone) and Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Piero Coppola. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

In a letter to his publisher, Jacques Durand, Debussy wrote on September 11, 1905: "Madame E. Hall, the *femme-saxophone*, politely demands her fantasie; I should like to oblige her, for she deserves a reward for her patience." Doubtless the reference in this letter refers to the work here listed. Mrs. Richard J. Hall (Elise Hall) was a Boston woman who besides being an accomplished musician was also quite a patron of Euterpe. Her love for music, French music in particular, led her to organize the Boston Orchestra Club. Mrs. Hall was a proficient player of the clarinet and saxophone. She commissioned several French composers to write music for her instrument. Debussy's *Rapsodie pour Orchestre et Saxophone* was composed in 1903 but the score was not published, however, until a year after his death. Issued in 1919, the piece bore the dedication "*a Mme Elise Hall de l'Orchestra Club de Boston.*"

The Rhapsody is scored for an E-flat saxophone with accompanying orchestra of three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, tambourine, cymbals, harp and strings.

Lawrence Gilman writing an annotation of this work, says, "The piece is prophetic of certain elements in the jazz of today. Note, for example, the synco-

pation in the solo part and in the orchestral accompaniment (as the "Scotch Snap") which is a feature of the opening subject for violins, and the rag-time rhythm of certain phrases of the saxophone part." This *Rapsodie* was one of the first works written for the instrument and contributed highly in giving it a concerto importance. The recording is particularly good, the rich timbre of the saxophone standing in fine relief, not too boldly, before the accompanying orchestra. M. Viard is a soloist of the first order; there is no question about that.



CHAMBER MUSIC



**BACH
HONEGGER**

**G-135
and
G-136**

IMPORTED

Sonata in E Flat Major for Piano and Flute. (Bach) Three sides. Played by René le Roy (Flute) and Kathleen Long (Piano). And

Danse de la Chèvre (Honegger) Played by René le Roy. Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

HANDEL

G-137

IMPORTED

Sonata No. 3 in G Major for Flute and Piano. Two sides. Played by René le Roy (Flute) and Kathleen Long (Piano). One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

P. L. writing in the December *The Gramophone* claims: "There are probably not very many N. G. S. members who knew the sonatas for flute and piano by Bach and Handel. The opportunities for hearing them are few, and the output of both composers is so enormous that one may easily overlook them. If one does, one is missing a good thing, as René le Roy and Kathleen Long make evident—though one must admit that the artistry of the pair might convince us of the value of music far less significant than this." Rarely, if ever, are these works heard outside of the intimacy of a flutist's studio or an amateur's home. The particular characteristics of the flute record excellently and the beautiful mellowness of its tone, aptly described in Rockstro's work *The Flute* as lying between the somewhat nasal tone of the oboe and the hollow sound of the cooing dove, is exceptionally well reproduced in these splendid N. G. S. registrations. René le Roy is recognized as the most brilliant flutist of the present generation in France and he demonstrates to a degree, through the purity and fullness of his tone, his right to this place. He is a Conservatoire pupil of Hennebains and Gaubert. Miss Long has a true feeling for classical style and attends to her end with sureness and poise.

Of the Bach work there are two fast movements with an intermediate dance measure called *Siciliano*. This middle movement bears a close similarity to the *Sonata in C Minor*, Polydor 19869, recorded by cembalo and violin duettists.

Honegger's *Goat's Dance* is a quaint, piquant piece, with unexpected intervals, and sudden changes of mood and rhythm. It was especially composed for Le Roy. As an unaccompanied flute recording it is not altogether isolated, Debussy's *Syrinx* is available on a French Columbia record (C-D19056) played by Marcel Moyse.

The Handel sonata is made up of four short movements: Adagio-Allegro-Andante-Bourrée. The cool beauty of the slow movements is in charming contrast with the swift, athletic racing of the quick sections.



**HAYDN
PURCELL**

G-140

to

G-142

Incl.

IMPORTED

String Quartet in E Flat, Opus 76 No. 6 (Haydn) Five sides and
Four Part Fantasia No. 4 in C Minor. (Purcell) One side.
Played by The International String Quartet.
Three 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

Miniature score for the Haydn—Eulenburg No. 191.

LOCKE

G-143

IMPORTED

String Quartet No. 6. Fantasia; Courante-Ayre-Sarabande. Two
sides. Played by the International String Quartet.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

The following is reprinted from the 1930 catalogue of *The National Gramophonic Society* (London).

"The Haydn quartet begins, unusually and delightfully, with a fling of variations, followed by a fugal treatment of the theme. The second movement is, also remarkable, entitled *Fantasia*, the word implying here a kind of free meditation, instead of a more formal working out of the theme. The modulations are striking and uncommon. One is reminded a little of Bachian procedure, or of that pursued by the early keyboard writers—the whole enriched by the later harmonic resources. At the end is an astonishing twist of harmony. The *Minuet* too has its oddity—the middle section, commonly called *Trio*, but here *Alternativo*, which concerns itself with a couple of scales, one down and one up. This seems almost like a jest—Haydn just showing us what he can do with the most commonplace material. The last movement starts with less than that—only half a scale—and makes dapper play with this and other ideas, the first fiddle in particular having a happy time.

"The Purcell furnishes a commentary on and corrective of the idea that Haydn invented the string quartet. Sixty years before Haydn was at work, Purcell was experimenting with "Fantasias" in from three to eight parts. Into these brief works he puts an extra-ordinary amount of harmonic richness and surprise. The bold tone of the players stands up to this clear-cut, truly original music uncommonly well, and gives the measure of the composer's virile, inventive mind. The Purcell music has been transcribed by Peter Warlock, and edited by André Mangeot, from the original manuscript in the British Museum.

"The *String Quartet No. 6* is another piece of evidence that long before Haydn's time composers were trying out the string quartet idea. Peter Warlock has transcribed, and André Mangeot edited, six works in this form by Matthew Locke (1630-1677), one of the best-known composers of music for stage plays before Purcell. The quartets were for four viols, the predecessors of the modern violin family. Here they gain somewhat in size and quality by being played on the string quartet of today. The volume from which this one is taken is said to have been presented by the composer to King Charles II in 1672, so they are at least ten years earlier than the Purcell *Fantasias*, of the style of which an earlier N. G. S. record gives an example. The form of the quartet as we know it had not then been perfected, and the work is in suite form, with an introductory, fairly long movement in imitative style, and two of the dances of the suite, between which comes an *Ayre*—all very gracious, easy-going music, with a special touch of elegance in the dances, which gently and truly evoke their period-atmosphere."

The *National Gramophonic Society* have again succeeded in giving us splendid reproductions, wrought with delicacy of playing and precision of detail. The International String Quartet give a well-executed performance in every respect.

**TSCHAI-
KOWSKY**
V-4151

{ String Serenade in C Major: *Elégie*. Op. 48. Two sides. Played by the Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonieta conducted by Fabien Sevitzky. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$1.00.



In October, 1880, Tchaikowsky wrote to his friend and benefactor, Mme von Meck: "You can imagine, dear friend, that recently my Muse has been very benevolent, when I tell you that I have written two long works very rapidly: A Festival Overture for the Exhibition (*The Year 1812*, Op. 49) and a Serenade in four movements for string orchestra. The overture will be very noisy. I wrote it without much warmth of enthusiasm; therefore it has no great artistic value. The Serenade, on the contrary, I wrote from an inward impulse; I felt it, and venture to hope that this work is not without artistic qualities." The *String Serenade in C Major* is really one of the more charming works bequeathed by Tchaikowsky to the musical world. Rarely have such piquant effects been obtained without recourse to the other colors of the wood-winds or brass. The third movement, *Elégie*, belongs to the Russian's most inspired moments.

The *Elégie* has a tinge of melancholy about it; however, subdued and expressed in phrases of haunting beauty. The Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonieta give a delicate and impressionable reading under the sympathetic direction of Mr. Sevitzky.

MOZART
C-67740D
to
C-67742D
Incl.

{ Quartet in B Flat (K 458) "Hunting Quartet." Six sides. Played by the Lener String Quartet (Lener, Smilovits, Roth and Hartman). Three 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set No. 134, Price, \$6.00.

Miniature score—Philharmonia No. 330.

The *Quartet in B Flat* is fourth in the series of six works in this form dedicated by Mozart to Joseph Haydn with the following beautiful inscription:

"To my dear friend Haydn! A father who had concluded to send his children into the world at large, thought best to entrust them to the protection and guidance of a famous man who fortunately happened to be his best friend as well. Behold here, famous man and dearest friend, my six children. They are, to be sure the fruit of long and arduous work, yet some friends have encouraged me to assume that I shall see this work rewarded to some extent at least, and this flatters me into believing that these children shall some day offer me some comfort. You yourself, dearest friend, have shown me your approval of them during your last sojourn in this capital. Your praise, above encourages me to recommend them to you, and makes me hope that they shall not be entirely unworthy of your goodwill. May it please you, therefore, to receive them kindly and to be their father, their guide and their friend. From this moment I surrender to you all my rights on them, but beg you to regard with leniency the faults which may have remained hidden to the partial eye of their father, and not withstanding their shortcomings to preserve your noble friendship for him who loves them so dearly. Meanwhile I am, from all my heart, etc.

W. A. MOZART.

Vienna, September 1, 1785."

The work derives its sobriquet from the characteristic leading theme of the first movement. The jovial "hunting-horn" tune is further emphasized at the 26th bar as the theme conveys a very definite suggestion of horns, below a trill on the first violin. All of the movements except the usual Minuet and Trio are in the regular sonata form. The excellent brochure accompanying the album annotates the music thoroughly. Superlative praise of the Lener's fine playing is, one feels, unnecessary. As usual they are completely at home with classical music. This recording matches their other achievements.



PIANO

**HAYDN
RAMEAU**
**G-138
and
G-139**
IMPORTED

Sonata in C Minor: (1) Allegro moderato; (2) Andante con Moto; (3) Allegro. (Haydn) Three sides and
Theme and Variations in A Minor (Rameau) One side. Both played by Kathleen Long (Piano).
Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

These two discs make an admirable pendant to the formerly released N.G.S. records (G-129 and G-130) of the Mozart *Sonata in D Major*, the Muffat pieces, and the Couperin *Le Tic-Toc-Cloc ou Les Maillatins* played by the same artist. In her playing Miss Long does not let her own personality pervade the music too deeply; rather, she lets Mozart, Haydn, Couperin or Rameau speak for themselves. She thinks for and with the old composers' music which she so excellently plays. Under her hands the Haydn sonata speaks as freshly as do the quartets and symphonies. There is a wealth of idea and ornament in the first movement. Haydn was a much more notable writer of sonatas than most people consider him. Listen, for example, to the wayward grace of the second movement and the sparkling whirls that follow.

Recordings of Rameau's music are rare. This XVIII Century French musician wrote music for the harpsichord which is full of elegance and poise, a gracious play of easy power in rhythm and decoration, and an ability moreover to please. Claude Debussy once declared: "Music should humbly seek to please; within these limits great beauty may perhaps be found. Extreme complication is contrary to art. Beauty must appeal to the senses, must impress us or insinuate itself into us without any effort on our part. Take Leonardo da Vinci; take Mozart: these are the great artists."

"Couperin and Rameau," remarks Dr. Leon Vallas in commenting on this sensational and extraordinary statement of Debussy's, "must be classed among the great artists for this very reason; that being French musicians, they have, following the national tradition, wished 'above all to please.'"

J. STRAUSS
C-G50207D

Artists' Life Waltz. (Trans. Szreter). One side and
Die Fledermaus: Waltz. (Trans. Szreter). One side. Both played by Karol Szreter (Piano).
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

Rippling piano selections. Not as thrilling as the orchestral Strauss but pleasant enough for a change.

SCHUMANN

V-7184

to

V-7186

Incl.

Carnaval. Op. 9. (a) Prélude. (b) Pierrot. (c) Arlequin. (d) Valse Noble. (e) Eusebius. (f) Florestan. (g) Coquette. (h) Replique—Sphinxes. (i) Papillons. (j) A. S. C. H.—S. C. H. A. (Lettres dansantes). (k) Chiarina. (l) Chopin. (m) Estrella. (n) Reconnaissance. (o) Pantalon et Colombine. (p) Valse allemande. (q) Paganini. (r) Aveu. (s) Promenade. (t) Pause. (u) Marche des "Davidsbündler" contre les Philistins. Six sides. Played by Sergei Rachmaninoff (Piano).

Three 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-70. Price, \$6.50.



We now have two recorded editions of *Carnaval* played by two equally consummate musicians, Sergei Rachmaninoff and Alfred Cortot. The latter has recorded the popular suite for "*His Master's Voice*" while the Russian pianist has registered for our own Victor. There is, of course, considerable difference in the individual treatment accorded by both to the exposition of the pieces. However, the difference of interpretation lies mainly in the depth and capacity of the temperaments at variance. Cortot's playing is, as may be expected, lucid and transparent, tenderly graceful and vigorous by turns. The interpretation of Rachmaninoff displays his brilliant technique, clearness of phrasing and precise accentuation—colored, perhaps, more richly than the delicacy of the Frenchman's rendering permits. Both great artists treat the score with sympathy and taste; those who admire Rachmaninoff's virtuosity will want his set while those for whom Cortot is preferable will no doubt wish the *H. M. V.* recording.

From Dr. Philipp Spitta's paper on Schumann in *Grove's* we quote the following description of this collection of piano pieces:

"Here Schumann has depicted the merriment of a masquerade in musical pictures. *Carnaval* is a collection of small pieces, written one by one without any special purpose, and not provided either with collective or individual titles until later, when he arranged them in their present order. The musical connection between the pieces is that with few exceptions they all contain some reference to the succession of notes *a, es, c, h* (A, E_b, C, B) or *as, c, h* (A_b, C, B). Now Asch is the name of a small town in Bohemia, the home of a Fräulein Ernestine von Fricken, with whom Schumann was very intimate at the time of his writing this music. The same notes in another order, *s* (or *es*), *c, h, a*, are also the only letters in Schumann's own name which represent notes. This explains the title "Sphinxes," which is affixed to the ninth number. The pieces are named, some from characters in the masked ball—Pierrot, Arlequin, Pantalon and Colombine—and some are real persons. In this last category we meet with the members of the Davidsbünd—Florestan, Eusebius and Chiarina; Ernestine von Fricken, under the name Estrella, Chopin and Paganini; there is also a "Coquette" but it is not known for whom this is intended. Besides these, some of the pieces are named for situations and occurrences at the ball; a recognition, an avowal of love, a promenade, a pause in the dance (Reconnaissance, Aveu, Promenade, Pause); between these are heard the sounds of waltzes, and in one of the pieces the letters A-S-C-H and S-C-H-A, "Lettres dansantes," themselves dance boisterously and noisily, and then vanish like airy phantoms. A piece called "Papillons" (Op. 2) is inserted. The finale is called "March of the Davidsbündler against the Philistines." The symbol of the Philistines is the "grossvateranz" here called by Schumann a tune of the 17th-century. The fact of the march being in $\frac{3}{4}$ time has perhaps a humorous and symbolic meaning."



ORGAN

**DUPRE
DAQUIN**
V-D1722
IMPORTED

{ Cradle Song (Dupre) One side and
Le Coucou (Daquin—arr. Dupre) One side. Played on the
Organ of Queen's Hall, London, by Marcel Dupre.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

Dupre, the well known French organist, plays two selections of no great musical value. His own composition is mildly pleasing and as for the Daquin piece it is difficult to bestow praise on any sort of an arrangement of this nature. Originally written for the harpsichord it loses all of its character when played on the organ. However, the disc may be beneficial in interesting lovers of lighter music in the marvellous capacity of the king of instruments.

**BOELLMANN
SCHMID
VAN DEN
GHEYN**
B-90033

{ Toccata in C Minor (Boellmann, from Op. 25). One side and
(a) Gagliarda (Schmid). (b) Fugue in G (van den Gheyn).
One side. Both played by Alfred Sittard on the organ of St.
Michael's Church, Hamburg.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

Leon Boellmann's name is usually encountered only on programs of organ music. He was a French organist and composer, born in 1862, who died, at the age of thirty-four, too young to give his full measure. His output for the organ is not large but its quality is so good that it seems to have secured a permanent place in the repertory. A previous recording by Eduard Commette of the *Toccata* exists on Columbia 50125D. In comparison it will be noted that the organists differ in their use of stops for the playing of the piece. Sittard's rendering, we feel, is the better.

Bernhard Schmid, born 1548, was the son of a Strausburg organist. He published a book in organ tablature of preludes, toccatas, motets, canzonets, madrigals and fugues in 4, 5 and 6 parts in 1607. The *Gagliarda* dates to this period. Information relative to this early German polyphonist is hard to come by. The catalogue of the musical library at Lüneburg in the Michaeliskirche reveals not a work by Schmid. Yet this comprehensive library of the school, when J. S. Bach served his apprenticeship there, exhibited 1,100 items, attributed to no less than one hundred and seventy-five different composers and others grouped as "Incerti."

Van den Gheyn was an eighteenth century Flemish musician (1721-1785). In all likelihood (the initial here given on the record label is "G") this is the Matthais van den Gheyn rated in *Grove's* as the greatest member of a family of highly esteemed bell-founders who became famous also as an organist, carillonneur and composer. It is of note to remark that many of the old bells founded by the van den Gheyns, especially those at Turnhout and Termonde, were destroyed during the late war.

We mark this record as an unusual one inasmuch as the organ, one of the largest in Germany, is excellently reproduced; the compositions are unhackneyed and of unique interest; and the executant, one of the greatest living organists.

OPERA



DEBUSSY

V-4174
to
V-4176
Incl.
and
V-1444
and
V-9636
to
V-9639
Incl.

Pelléas et Mélisande. (a) Act 1, Scene 2—Interlude. (b) Act 1, Scene 3—Interlude. (c) Act 2, Scene 1 (Duet at the Well) —Vous ne savez pas? (d) Act 2, Scene 1 (Duet at the Well) —C'est au bord d'une fontaine? (e) Act 2, Scene 2—Interlude. (f) Act 2, Scene 2—Ah! Ah! tout va bien. (g) Act 2, Scene 3—Interlude. (h) Act 3, Scene 1—Il fait beau cette nuit. (i) Act 3, Scene 1—Je les tiens dans les mains. (j) Act 3, Scene 2—Interlude. (k) Act 3, Scene 3—Ah, je respire enfin. (l) Act 4, Scene 1—Maintenant que le père de Pelléas est sauvé. (m) Act 4, Scene 1—Une grande innocence. (n) Act 4, Scene 2—Interlude. (o) Act 4, Scene 2—Nous sommes venus ici. (p) Act 4, Scene 2—Quel est ce bruit?—On Ferme les portes. Sixteen sides. Sung by Yvonne Brothier, Charles Panzera, Willy Tubiana and Vanni-Marcoux with Symphony Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola.

Four 10-inch discs and four 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-68. Price, \$10.50.

Score (both miniature and piano)—Durand et Cie, Paris.

Some years ago the astute Krehbiel remarked apropos of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, "It is a flocculent web of hazy discord; novel but is it Art . . ." As a matter of fact, time has proven that the initial performance of *Pelléas* was an occasion of great musical progress and that the first audience witnessed the arrival of a distinctly new style of operatic writing and a revolutionary score which was to be universally acclaimed the most perfect balance ever achieved in the fusion of music and the theatre. These excerpts represent something over a third of the opera and when they are combined with the Columbia records (available only through the importers) give reproductions totaling two-thirds of the complete score. The Victor records were formerly available in America in their French "*La Voix de son Maître*" pressings. A brochure, published by the H. Royer Smith Company, was issued in which the discs, both Victor and Columbia, were arranged in chronological order and annotated as regards the story of Maeterlinck's drama and the accompanying music of Claude Debussy. Copies of this brochure *The New Electrical Recordings of Debussy's Pelléas et Mélisande*, by Richard Gilbert, will be sent free of charge by addressing this magazine.



The Brochure

The Latest Additions to
THE MUSICAL MASTERPIECE SERIES

Schumann's *Carnaval*. Played by Sergei Rachmaninoff, pianist. Three twelve-inch records in Album M-70 (Nos. 7184-7186) and in automatic sequence, AM-70 (Nos. 7187-7189). List Price, \$6.50.

Not without reason has Schumann's "Carnaval" been for generations one of the most popular numbers on recital programs, for this masterpiece of Romanticism has a wealth of melody, is rich in striking contrasts, and offers ample opportunities for the display of piano virtuosity.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, who often plays the "Carnaval" at his recitals, is deserving of great praise for his sympathetic and musicianly interpretation. As presented here, it constitutes one of the most excellent piano recordings ever achieved.

Mozart's *Symphony in D Major* (K.385). Played by Arturo Toscanini and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York. Three twelve-inch records in Album M-65 (Nos. 7136-7138) and in automatic sequence, AM-65 (Nos. 7139-7141). List Price, \$6.50.

Mozart wrote this symphony for some family festival held at the home of friends named Haffner, and hence it has come to be known as the "Haffner" symphony. He kept the purpose of its composition in mind, for there is not a solemn moment in the entire work . . . gaiety, light-heartedness, and frivolity prevail throughout.

Toscanini, who has become famous for the insight and charm of his interpretations of the masters of the eighteenth century, featured this symphony on his programs a season ago. All who heard it then will certainly want to own these records.

Debussy's *Pelleas et Melisande*. Sung by artists of l'Opéra and l'Opéra-Comique, Paris, with an orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola. Selected passages from the opera on four ten-inch records and four twelve-inch records in Album M-68 (Nos. 4174-4176, 9636-9639, and 1444). With special libretto. List Price, \$10.50.

Once the storm center of a violent discussion, Pelléas et Mélisande has come to be accepted as one of the great operas of modern times. The records in this album have been chosen to embody the most beautiful episodes of the lyric-drama, including: the entire scene at the fountain of the blind; the meeting of the lovers at the tower; Golaud's terrifying denunciation, *Une grande innocence*, and the final meeting of Pelléas and Mélisande, a scene in which Debussy reveals a command and range of dramatic emotion not inferior to Wagner's. The album includes the orchestral interludes played during the changes of scene; and the accompanying libretto contains a synopsis of the plot and the text of the vocal records in French and English.



Victor Division,
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, N. J.

**MOUSSORG-
SKY**

C-50208D

Boris Goudonov: Coronation Scene and Polonaise. Two sides.
Sung by Mlle. Ferrer and Chorus of the Paris Opera with
Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.



Oskar von Riesemann's fine treatise on Moussorgsky contains the following note on the Polonaise: "The big Polonaise in the garden scene has the right ring of festal splendor. It was Moussorgsky's original intention to orchestrate this for strings only, in imitation of the *"quatre-vingt violons du roi"*; he came to the conclusion, however, that it was impossible to create a musical setting of sufficient brilliance without the aid of both wood-wind and brass. The somewhat archaic flavor of the piece, in keeping with its period, is due to the fact that the composer employs the Lydian mode throughout—whether consciously or not we cannot tell. The old Polish folk-tunes, like the Russian, always show a preference for the ecclesiastical modes, and of these (as we see in many of Chopin's dances) they seem to prefer Lydian and mixolydian. It is doubtful if Moussorgsky was aware of this—with him the intuition of genius often hit upon the right way.

"The music of *Boris* is naturally and by intention national. The opera also shows very remarkable instrumental episodes—e.g., the introduction and second scene of the Prologue, when we have an imitation of a festal peal from all the belfries of the Kremlin in honor of the Tsar's coronation. This short piece, built as it is on only two chords, is an experiment in sound-painting, of an audacity unprecedented at that date, and still surprisingly effective. Even Cui remarked that the clashing of bells in Moussorgsky's orchestra sounded "more natural" than those in the steeples."

The massed scenes in *Boris* have nothing in common with the usual choruses of conventional opera. That method of "naturalism" or "realism," which Moussorgsky arrived at quite independently, is displayed nowhere so well as in this choral writing. The delicate psychological motivation of the mass is true to nature. Every tone, every word, every gesture is assisted by the Russian's unique power of giving direct impression by his singularly poignant artistic representation.

This record displays the "best" quality of reproduction that we have encountered in listening to the available *Boris* records. The orchestra is well under hand. One is sorry that the text is sung in French. The Odeon records of *Boris* excerpts (3279 and 3280) have the distinct advantage over all others of being sung in Russian. The Victor records, made during an actual Covent Garden performance lack the vitality so much needed everywhere in this magnificent opera. There are differences of tempo, etc., but on the whole, for true sonority, we prefer the Paris Opera rendering.

T. D.

**VERDI
DONIZETTI
V-7191**

Don Carlos: Act 3—O Don Fatale (Oh, Fatal Gift). (Verdi).
One side and
La Favorita: Act 3—O Mio Fernando (Oh, Dearest Ferdinand)
(Donizetti). One side. Both sung by Sigrid Onegin (Con-
tralto) with Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

Repenting of the rash act which has sent her lover, Don Carlos, to prison, the Princess pours forth her grief in the aria "O don fatale," a melody of great beauty and dramatic force which is here superbly sung by the Swedish contralto.

The sustained melancholy air of Leonora, "O mio Fernando," in which she declares her willingness to sacrifice everything for Ferdinand's sake is sung by Onegin with marvellous histrionic ability. The disc is a fine one. We wish that the accompanying orchestra was of larger proportions.

COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS^{*} SERIES

FORTHCOMING ISSUES



TSCHAIKOWSKY Symphony No. 4, in F Minor. This first of Tschaikowsky's great trinity of symphonies is unmistakably one of his most inspired scores, instinct with a tremendous vitality. Its recording by Willem Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam is one of the milestones in record interpretation—a fitting companion for his Fifth Symphony—Columbia recording of the same composer.

Columbia Masterworks Set No. 133.

Tschaikowsky: Symphony No. 4, in F Minor, Op. 36. By Willem Mengelberg and Concertgebouw Orchestra, of Amsterdam. In ten parts. \$10.00 with album.

MOZART Quartet in B Flat (K.458). The beautiful "Hunt" Quartet of Mozart embodies some of the most fascinating music found anywhere in the voluminous literature of this master-composer. The gaiety of its rapid movements and the grace of its minuet are equalled by the peace and loveliness of its adagio. An interpretation by the Lener Quartet insures the last word in chamber music recording.



Columbia Masterworks Set No. 134.

Mozart: Quartet in B Flat (K.458). ("Hunting Quartet"). By Lener String Quartet (Lener, Smilovits, Roth and Hartman). In Six Parts. \$6.00 with album.



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"Magic Notes"

Columbia Phonograph Co., New York City

**GIORDANO
PUCCINI**
V-7183

Andrea Chenier: Act 1—Once o'er the Azure fields (Giordano)
One side and
The Girl of the Golden West: Act 3—Let Her Believe (Puccini)
One side. Both sung by Armand Tokatyan (Tenor) with
Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.



This record introduces Armand Tokatyan as a Victor Red Seal artist. As the disc faithfully shows his voice is sympathetic and rich and he sings both arias with a capacity for great feeling. The aria of Chenier, when he has been asked to improvise on the subject "Love," progresses into an appeal for the poor who have been oppressed by those in power.

The Puccini air is the dying request of the hero in the opera (*The Girl of the Golden West* was recently revived at the Metropolitan). Tokatyan expresses emotion and dramatic power in the interpretation of these roles.

**DONIZETTI
MASSENET**
C-50205D

Elisir d'Amore: Una furtive Lagrima (A Furtive Tear). (Donizetti). One side and
Manon: Il sogno (The Dream). (Massenet). One side. Both
sung by Dino Borgioli (Tenor) with Orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

The popular *Elisir d'Amore* aria is sung well by the Milan tenor. We hardly care for "The Dream" sung in Italian. Occasionally Borgioli misses the pitch. Otherwise the disc is good, particularly the orchestral part of the recording.

WAGNER
O-5193

Tannhäuser: Act 1, Scene 3—Herd Boy's Song and Pilgrims' Chorus. Two sides. Sung by Else Knepel (Soprano), Hans Clemens, (Tenor) and the Berlin State Opera House Chorus and Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

This scene, which follows directly upon Tannhäuser's departure from the court of Venus, was first planned by Wagner in the summer of 1842. One day, while climbing the highest peak in the neighborhood of Töplitz, the Wostrai, he heard a lively dance tune whistled by a goatherd high on a crag. The little incident made a vivid impression upon Wagner's quick mind, and he seemed to see himself, as he tells us in *Mein Leben*, among the Pilgrims of his opera, filing past the goatherd in the valley below.

The record begins with the shepherd's song, and presently the song of the elder Pilgrims coming down the mountain path from the Wartburg is heard. The herd boy continues, for a time, to develop his little fantasia between each of the lines of the Pilgrims' chorus, though always in faster tempo. The chorus, in four parts (two tenors and two basses), speaks of the Pilgrims' journey to Rome, where they seek pardon for their sins. Tannhäuser, who has remained silent all this while, suddenly finds voice in an electrifying outburst, "Almighty God be praised! Great are the marvels of his mercy." One of the most tremendous climaxes of the opera, it is recorded with fine effect here.

The soloists are satisfactory, but a fine-toned chorus, singing with great strength and poise, contribute one of the features of a competent performance.

NEW RED SEAL VICTOR RECORDS

Siegfried—Forest Murmurs (Wagner). Played by Willem Mengelberg and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York on two sides of Victor record 7192. List Price, \$2.00.

(a) *Songs My Mother Taught Me* (Dvořák). (b) *Flight of the Bumble Bee* (Rimsky-Korsakow) and

Song Without Words in D (Mendelssohn). Played by Pablo Casals (Violoncello) on Victor record 7193. List Price, \$2.00.

Adagio (from Mozart's Concerto in G Major) and

Sarabande and Tambourin (Leclair-Sarasate). Played by Master Yehudi Menuhin (Violin). Victor record 7182. List Price, \$2.00.

Don Carlos—O don fatale (Verdi) and

La Favorita—O mio Fernando (Donizetti). Sung by Sigrid Onegin (Contralto) on Victor record 7191. List Price, \$2.00.

Elegie (from Tschaikowsky's String Serenade in C Major). Played by the Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonieta, Fabien Sevitzy, founder and conductor. On two sides of Victor record 4151. List Price, \$1.00.

Andrea Chenier—Un di all azzurro spazio (Giordano) and

The Girl of the Golden West—Ch'ella mi creda libero (Puccini). Sung by Armand Tokatyan. Victor record 7183. List Price, \$2.00.

All Through the Night (Boulton—Old Welsh Air) and

My Lovely Celia (Old English). Sung by Reinald Werrenrath on Victor record 1443. List Price, \$1.50.

Other New Victor Records of Interest to Music Lovers

Semiramide Overture (Rossini). Played by the Victor Symphony Orchestra on two sides of Victor record 22288. List Price, 75c.

Midnight Bells (from Heuberger's "The Opera Ball") and

Passion Rose (from Lehár's "Romany Love"). Played by the Victor Novelty Orchestra on Victor record 22280. List Price, 75c.

The Music you want WHEN you want it—on Victor Records.



Victor Division,
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, N. J.

R. STRAUSS
O-5194

The Egyptian Helen: Act I—Helen's Aria. One side and
The Egyptian Helen: Act II—Helen's Aria. One side. Both
sung by Rose Pauly-Dresden (Soprano) with the Berlin State
Opera Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.



Odeon missed a splendid opportunity by not releasing this German recording in the fall of 1928, at which time the latest opera from the now sterile pen of Richard Strauss had its premier in America. To collectors who depend blindly on Strauss' past performance, we make the warning—this is not the Strauss of old. Richard's virtuosity has lost much of its old power and lustre. The singer does very well and is splendidly accompanied.

VOCAL



DELIUS

C-L2344
IMPORTED

Evening Voices (Twilight Fancies). (Words by F. S. Copeland)
One side and

(a) Cradle Song. (b) The Nightingale. (Words by (a) William
Archer and (b) W. Crist). One side. Both sung by Dora
Labette (Soprano) with Sir Thomas Beecham at the piano.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.90.

Delius' songs were given a prominent place at the Festival in London last Fall, and for some people their beauty came as a revelation. This side of Delius has been neglected; his choral and orchestral works have in recent years so absorbed the public's attention as to overshadow the songs. The three recorded above are sung by Dora Labette, whose pure soprano and sensitive interpretative skill are admirably adapted to Delius' isolated genius. Sir Thomas Beecham, who was chiefly responsible for the Delius Festival and who has consistently championed the composer for the past twenty years, contributes the piano accompaniment. This is his first appearance on the discs as a pianist, though he is well known to record collectors for his work with the London Symphony and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras.

R. STRAUSS
C-2125D

Zueignung (Devotion). One side and

Traum durch die Dämmerung (Dreams in the Twilight). One
side. Both sung by Alexander Kipnis (Bass) with piano accom-
paniment by Arthur Bergh.
One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

Hoch! Domestic releases of Strauss' songs have not been plentiful. In the foreign Polydor catalogue will be found both of the above sung by Slezak and Schlusnus, tenor and baritone respectively. Elsa Alsen has recorded *Traum durch die Dämmerung* for Columbia (C-141M). Kipnis, the popular bass, sings both songs with feeling and musicianship. He is admirably accompanied by Arthur Bergh.

No one can deny the beauty of Strauss' songs. They are remarkable both for lyrical charm of melody and extraordinary insight into the meaning of the text and picturesque accompaniment. May we have more of them! Particularly, *Ich Schwebe*, Opus 48 and *Heimliche Aufforderung*, Opus 27.

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VIOLIN



ALBENIZ- DUSHKIN GATTY

C-2126D

Tango. (Albeniz-Dushkin). One side and Bagatelle in D. (Gatty). One side. Both played by Yelly d'Aranyi (Violin) with piano accompaniment by Arthur Bergh. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

Albeniz's *Tango!* You can get it by Bachaus (piano) on Victor 1445, by Echaniz (piano) on Columbia 162M, by Novaes (piano) on Victor 1323; and, if you tire of the Godowsky transcription for piano, there is, besides the excellent recording of the violin arrangement listed above, a record by Kreisler (violin) on Victor 1339. Then if you decide to go in for combinations let us suggest the two string quartet recordings, Columbia 2068 by the Musical Art Quartet and Brunswick 3211 by the New York String Quartet. Another release of this Spanish piece and we are going to go in for "obtestations" in the hopes of having *Tango* on the saxophone, the oboe, other members of the wood-wind family, the pipe organ, the double bass and why not the harp? A sensible arrangement at that.

The reverse side will hardly raise the record's sales value. Gatty, it seems, is an English composer born in the seventies. Or can it be some other Gatty?

LECLAIR- SARASATE MOZART

V-7182

Sarabande and Tambourin. (Leclair-Sarasate). One side and Concerto in G Major: Adagio. (Mozart). One side. Both played by Master Yehudi Menuhin (Violin) with piano accompaniment by Louis Persinger. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

Young Yehudi Menuhin recently so amazed Mr. Ernest Newman with his mature and superlative playing of the César Franck Sonata that the noted critic questioned whether, after all, it really does require any considerable amount of intelligence to be a great violinist. Mr. Newman seemed convinced that the boy was entirely undeveloped in all departments of the mind except the purely musical. If the astounding and seemingly incredible reports circulating about the young violinist are actually true, Mr. Newman's thesis loses much of its force. For it is said that Yehudi has read the complete works of Anatole France in the original French, and not only that but reads the *New York Nation* every week.

What is true of the boy's playing in public is largely true of his records. They reveal the same firm intellectual grasp of the subject at hand, the same beautiful tone and the same consummate technique. He here plays the *Adagio* from the Mozart *Concerto in G Major* and the *Sarabande and Tambourin* from Leclair's *Sonata in D Major*. There is a Polydor recording of the *Sarabande and Tambourin* (record No. 19871) played by Licco Amar (Violin) and Gunther Ramin (Cembalo), but young Yehudi's recording, in the Sarasate arrangement, is the more interesting. Viewed solely on its own merits, with no consideration of the violinist's tender age, the record is an exceptional one.

YAMADA ZIMBALIST C-2110D

Kuruka Kuruka. (Japanese Lullaby). (Yamada). One side and Improvisation on a Japanese Tune. (Zimbalist). One side. Both played by Efreim Zimbalist (Violin) with piano accompaniment by Emanuel Bey. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

One of the great violinists in interpretations of pieces the musical value of which is *nil*.



**DRDLA
KREISLER
B-15217**

Souvenir. (Drdla). One side and
La Gitana. (Old Gypsy Song). (Kreisler). One side. Both
played by Max Rosen (Violin) with piano accompaniment by
Richard Wilens. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

Even superlative recording and fiddling fail to overcome the depressing artificiality of Drdla's banal tune. No violinist seems completely happy until he has added it to his list. The Kreisler piece is somewhat better, which is by means high praise.



VOLONCELLO

**DVORAK
MENDELSSOHN
RIMSKY-KORSAKOW
V-7193**

(1) Songs My Mother Taught Me. (Dvorak, Op. 55, No. 4)
(2) Flight of the Bumble Bee. (Rimsky-Korsakow). One
side and
Song Without Words, in D. (Mendelssohn, Op. 109). One side.
Both played by Pablo Casals (Violoncello) with piano accompaniment by Blas-Net. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

Beyond all doubt Casals has developed the resources of 'cello technique and expression to a limit of unsuspected possibilities. Listen to the magical transcription of Rimsky's *Flight of the Bumble Bee*? Trick fiddling, perhaps, but what amazing skill!

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CHORAL



**MORLEY
EAST
WEELKES**

C-9877
IMPORTED

- (a) I Follow, Lo, the Footing. (Morley). (b) Trio: How Merrily We Live. (Michael East). One side and
O Care, Thou Wilt Despatch Me (Weelkes). One side. Sung by the St. George's Singers. (Unaccompanied.)
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

These madrigals, by three of the leading Elizabethan composers, are sung, unaccompanied, by the St. George's Singers. Their work is on a consistently high level. The Morley and East pieces, with their infectious gaiety and charm of another and more simple age, offer a sudden contrast to the striking chromatic harmonies of the Weelkes madrigal.

The release of such a disc as this and the publication of Gerald R. Hayes' series of books, *Musical Instruments and Their Music, 1500-1750*, the first of which, *The Treatment of Instrumental Music*, is reviewed under BOOKS in this issue, is very encouraging. The brilliant music of the Elizabethan era well deserves thorough and intelligent investigation, as this disc and Mr. Hayes' essay readily prove.

MISCELLANEOUS



DEBUSSY
V-W1025
IMPORTED

- Danses pour Harpe. (a) Danse sacrée. (b) Danse profane.
Played by Mlle Lily Laskine (harp) and Symphony Orchestra
under the direction of M. Piero Coppola.
One 12-inch disc. Price, \$2.00.

Miniature score: Durand et Cie, Paris.

The *Danse sacrée* and *Danse profane* were written by Debussy in 1904 at which time his creative efforts were crystallizing into his ripest and maturest period. The *Danses* are full of atmospheric effects; the first embodies a vivid suggestion of some stately pagan ritual, the second is naturally less restrained. Parallel movements of blocks of chords form excellent contrasts to the arpeggios and scale passages of the more ornamental chromatic harp part. Strangely enough, Mr. Ernest Newman, whose critical acumen is usually beyond reproach, ridicules the *Danses'* block-like chord formations as "cheap and clumsy exploitations of a few harmonic oddities," wooden and stiff in character and novel resonances which fascinate the composer for their own sake. A more curious, penetrating and far-seeing aesthete would certainly have discerned the *Danses'* harmonic adumbration of the chord-blocks and progressions in many contemporary writings and an analogy surely apparent in the cubistic fruition of much of Picasso's painting. An older recording of these pieces is published by the National Gramophonic Society for piano and strings. The chromatic harp usually being hard to come by, Debussy scored the work for piano as well. Mlle Laskine plays with exquisite beauty and taste and the recording, coming from France, displays a superb actuality.

R. G.



AND OTHER DISCS

- V-1448** { Rio Rita (McCarthy-Tierney) One side and
Only a Rose (Hooker-Friml) One side. Both sung by Richard
Crooks (Tenor) with Orchestra.
One 10-inch disc. Price, \$1.50.

From the Radio picture "Rio Rita" and the Paramount picture "The Vagabond King." Good singing.

- B-15218** { Ma Curly Headed Baby. (Plantation Song). One side and
Carry Me Back To Old Virginny. (Bland). One side. Both
sung by Marie Tiffany (Soprano) with Male Trio and Or-
chestra. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

Swinburne should have heard this before speaking so ecstatically of the "noble art of praising."

- C-50206D** { Echoes of the Valley. (Duet for Flute and Echo Flute. (J.
Gennin). Played by Sir Dan Godfrey and Bournemouth
Municipal Orchestra. Jean Gennin: Flute. Pierre Gennin:
Echo Flute. One side and
Gavroches. (Syncopated Duet for Piccolo and Flute) (J. Gen-
nin). One side. Played by Sir Dan Godfrey and Bournemouth
Municipal Orchestra. (Piccolo and Flute Duet by Pierre and
Jean Gennin). One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

The value of the record is contained in the information appearing on the label. We know of no other recording of a like nature.

- C-2111D** { The Sacred Hour. (Reverie). (Ketelbey). Two sides. Played
by Albert W. Ketelbey and His Light Concert Orchestra with
Organ (W. G. Werber) and Columbia Opera Company.
One 10-inch disc. Price, \$0.75.

If you are a Ketelbey addict this is a good studio recording and an authoritative "interpretation."



TUNES OF THE MOMENT

There's Danger in Your Eyes, Cherie! by Guy Lombardo
and His Royal Canadians (Columbia 2107-D). Price,
\$0.75.

Strike Up the Band! by Victor Arden—Phil Ohman and
Their Orchestra (Victor 22308). Price, \$0.75.

Puttin' on the Ritz by Leo Reisman and His
Orchestra (Victor 22306). Price, \$0.75.



HONEGGER, POULENC AND MILHAUD

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37)

The Odeon record 123,592 (Parts A and B) contains the part beginning on page 173, *Psaume de pénitence*; goes through to the end of the section. The succeeding part of the side, "*De mon cœur jaillit—*" returns to page 166 and continues to the beginning of the *Psaume* mentioned above. We do not understand the reason for this inversion; however, it is not an important matter. The opposite side of the disc contains the beautiful *Psaume* beginning: "*Je fus concu dans le péché—*" which follows the *Psaume de pénitence* and extend from page 178 to page 190, thus concluding thirty-four consecutive pages, recorded, of the symphonic psalm.

That *Le Roi David* is destined to live as a great example of modern choral writing seems assured. The many fine qualities which the work possesses should guarantee this future. Besides containing splendid elements of the picturesque, of descriptive poetry and intrinsic lyric characteristics, *Le Roi David* has a precision of accent and an evocative power imbued with suppleness and vigor, simplicity and nobility. Honegger has in spots given us some superlative examples of polytonal writing. In chamber music, as we have suggested, this method does not noticeably enrich the vocabulary, but in descriptive music, polytonality makes positive certain very desirable effects. *Le Roi David* is without doubt a modern masterpiece.

The orchestral works represented in the phonographic repertoire are *Pacific 231*, the famous locomotive piece, the *Rugby*, descriptive of the popular European game. The first antedates the later by five years, being composed in 1923. As Romanticism tugged at the reins of the Classic order, as the Italian aria and the *singspiel* were replaced by the Music-Drama and the *leit-motiv*, like the overthrow of the "heart on the sleeve" school of the nineteenth century by a more contemplative Impressionism; so, this nature-sentiment has been superceded by a new style, the sporting aspect. Andre Coeuroy writes, in the *Musical Quarterly* (October, 1929), "It was Stravinsky who, with his *Le Sacré du Printemps*, rendered possible what the estheticians so neatly denominate the "objective dynamism" of the younger school as opposed to the "static objectivism" of a Debussy (*La Mer*) or a Ravel (*Jeux d'eau*). The "sporting theme" thereupon branches out; we have the *Sports et Divertissements* of Satie, the *Promenades* of Poulenc, the *Train bleu* of Milhaud, Elliot's *Bicycle Sonata*, Honegger's *Skating Rink*, *Rugby*, *Pacific 231*, crowned by his *Horace Victorieux* . . . Machines, crowds, velocities. And no more of love—of that love whose last great interpreter was Debussy. No more eroticism—that eroticism

whose last great purveyor was Richard Strauss. Voluptuous love forsakes music; Poulenc's *Les Biches* and *Chansons gaillards* are a rarity in contemporary art. Machines, speed, speed."

In an interview, Honegger said of *Pacific 231*: "I have always had a passion for locomotives. To me they are living beings whom I love as others love women or horses. In *Pacific 231* I have not aimed to imitate the noise of an engine, but rather to express in terms of music a visual impression and physical enjoyment. The piece opens with an 'objective' contemplation, the quiet breathing of the engine at rest, the straining at starting, the gradually increasing speed—and finally reaches the lyrical pathetic state of a fast train, three hundred tons of weight, thundering through the silence of the night at a mile a minute. The subject of my composition was an engine of the Pacific type, number 231, used for heavy loads and built for great speed." The composition is a fascinating one. We have a picture, alienated from all literary suggestion, presenting a machine tearing full-storm-ahead with all the grandeur of modern machinery extolled, without a single concession to program music and without recourse to the puerile manner of imitative music. It is by purely musical means that Honegger has evoked this internal dynamism and has achieved the *tour de force* of expressing in sound that special drunkenness which is the lyric quality of speed. In regard to the recording we are sorry to say that Piero Coppola's reading, while splendidly defined and well-poised, is, as a matter of fact, poorly reproduced.

As regards reproduction *Rugby* has fared well. The French *La Voix de son Maître* recording is well-volumed and well-controlled. *Rugby* was composed in August, 1928, and was first performed at Paris in the following autumn. On first hearing the work strikes one as being somewhat mannered; however, this feeling soon departs with the realization that in this piece Honegger's utterance is a matured expression of that radiation of the proud and brutal joy of youth sought for in his earlier *Horace Victorieux*. The polytonal style is here exemplified in a fully-developed perception of his own individual progress. As a piece of descriptive music *Rugby* is a success; as a monument of pure tonal beauty it ranks, to us at least, as a marvellously lucid example of fine contrapuntal virtuosity and a work which in craftsmanship, realization of form, great rhythmical interest and fugal development is one of the most completely and economically achieved and highly inspired symphonic movements among present day works.

BOOKS

Manuel de Falla and Spanish Music. By J. B. Trend. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1929. Price, \$2.50.

This book is the first detailed and authoritative study of Falla's music to appear in America. It is most welcome considering the present vogue for the Spaniard's music, a fashion which has all the earmarks of becoming a permanent appreciation in the hearts of admirers of modern music. Mr. Trend tells us that his book is in no sense an interview but that its object is to give an account of the work of a contemporary composer, to be concerned not with the man but with his music. The study begins with certain general considerations on Spanish music: the "Spanish style," the work of Pedrell, and the so-called renaissance of Spanish music. Mr. Trend has been personally acquainted with Manuel de Falla for a number of years and he is considered an authority on the tonal art of Spain. A complete chapter is devoted to each of the significant works of Falla: *La Vida Breve*, *The Noches*, *El Amor Brujo*, *Fantasia Betica*, *The Three-Cornered Hat*, *The Puppet-Show* and the Harpsichord Concerto. The Spanish idiom is appraised and Falla's relation to his contemporaries considered. The book is well-written and is satisfying in many respects as an appreciation of great value. An appendix contains translations of the *Seven Spanish Songs*. It is of interest to note that excellent recordings exist of several excerpts from *La Vida Breve* and complete editions of all of the above mentioned works with the exception of the piano piece—*Fantasia Betica*, *The Puppet-Show* and the Harpsichord Concerto.

Musical Instruments and Their Music, 1500-1750: The Treatment of Instrumental Music. By Gerald R. Hayes. London: Oxford University Press. Price, \$1.75.

Mr. Hayes, in his valuable little book, vigorously combats the assumption, accepted all too placidly by many musicians and music lovers who should know better, that such instruments of the past as the lute, the viol and

the recorder are now practically obsolete simply because they have been replaced by something definitely superior. In this theory the author finds nothing but gross ignorance and a lazy disinclination to examine the facts, now fortunately available for those sufficiently enterprising to investigate them. He not only contends that many old instruments are fully the equal of their modern equivalents, or, more properly, what are commonly regarded as such, but he goes so far as to say that a number of them are actually superior in tone quality.

The pious belief that genuinely great music should sound well on any instrument, Mr. Hayes hints, is precisely the same as believing the *Eroica* would be inspiring on a barrel organ. Thus he is strongly opposed to the practice of arranging old music for modern instruments. It is this dangerous procedure that is largely responsible for the failure of a great many of us to appreciate some of the old music. "If a great master had a choice of instruments and deliberately chose one in preference to another," he says, "it must surely be taken without question that he did so after a due balance of consideration for the purpose of obtaining a particular effect."

To the task of writing this essay, Mr. Hayes brings a wide and thorough familiarity with old music and instruments. More, he has apparently heard a great many old scores played as they were originally written, an advantage which he holds over the vast majority of music lovers to whom such opportunities seldom present themselves. An immense amount of information is packed in this little book, and Mr. Hayes writes with unflinching charm. There are to be four more volumes in the series, all of which have been examined by Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch. A reading of this book and a hearing of the exquisite *Fantasies for Two Viols* by Morley and the *Fantasy for Six Viols* by Dering recorded by the Dolmetsch Group on Columbia record 9837, will go far to convince doubters that the past was surprisingly rich in striking and enduring music.

R. J. M.

